



Message from the Dean

Welcome to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) at Zayed University (ZU). I am honored and excited to be leading the college during this time of transition. I have been a professor of political science at ZU since 2002, became the acting Associate Dean in August of 2017 and, now, have the privilege of serving as Acting Dean.

According to its mission, CHSS aspires to be nationally and internationally recognized for excellence in teaching and research in the humanities and social sciences. It aims to foster graduates who are able to positively contribute to their communities and apply humanistic and social scientific thinking in a diverse, globalized, and increasingly technological world. We pride ourselves in promoting critical thinking, advanced research, and global awareness that empower graduates to succeed as future leaders, professionals and citizens. Based on this vision, the College is keen to design and develop curricula that will help graduates develop their basic skills required for the labor market, especially in the areas of creativity and innovation.

We launch the CHSS Newsletter to promote communication and a culture of openness and collegiality among faculty members. We hope to use this platform to enhance not only



communication but also to exchange ideas and views that would help achieve our vision and mission.

Again, welcome to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. We hope that this newsletter will be the first of many, facilitating communication and highlighting our faculty, staff and other CHSS news.

Wishing you all a wonderful term ahead.

Sincerely,

Hamdy Hassan

Acting Dean and Professor



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Newsletter Editorial Board

Ms. Suha Karaki
Dr. Hamza Saad
Supervised by: Acting Dean Dr. Hamdy Hassan

James Williams Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

James Williams is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Sciences at Zayed University, Dubai. He studied Social Anthropology at Cambridge University and the Johns Hopkins University. His research concerns young male African migrants and refugees in South Africa, focusing on their strategies and practices of survival and entrepreneurialism.

James has been the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs since 2016. He believes the best part of this job is getting to see the college and its academic programs from the perspective of the students, and observing how students grow and develop during their university studies.

A large portion of student affairs means advising students, looking after them in the college, A large portion of student affairs means advising students, looking after them in the college, overseeing and deciding who gets admitted,

ensuring they are taking the correct courses and completing the requirements of the degree programs, and then approving their graduation. James also holds responsibility for overseeing extracurricular activities for the students. CHSS does a great job with those endeavors, such as trips within the UAE and to other countries, as well as to the Model United Nations at the American University of Sharjah, which takes place next month.

HSS students are always eager to participate in activities and trips outside of the classroom, and James enjoys teaching them immensely, which to him is his favorite part of the job. Most of the college's students are organized and very easy to work with, and take their studies seriously. Student Affairs is encouraging students to bring issues forward early so they can be solved and dealt with before it is too late.

Students often wait until a crisis has developed before asking for assistance, and then they come with problems that are too difficult to solve. Student Affairs can do a lot more to support students if they raise issues earlier. James also believes Zayed University is doing a great job supporting students with disabilities and providing students with high-standard counseling. CHSS programs and courses are popular and the number of students is increasing quickly.

This is positive news for the college, but there is a need to increase the number of faculty involved in undergraduate advising to ensure students are guided properly and reach graduation in a timely manner. Fortunately, the college has been joined recently by Bushra Fahad, the academic advisor, who is doing an amazing job in Student Affairs, but greater support will be needed as the college continues to grow.



Alumni Feature

Amna Al Saleh

Instructor and Quality Coordinator

Amna Al Saleh graduated with a degree in International Studies from Zayed University in 2012. She worked for a year after graduation and then did her Masters in the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOA) in London. With a renowned degree and a strong passion in international studies, Amna came back to Dubai to work in a newly-formed organization called the World Free Zones Organization.

A few months later, she joined ZU and the University College in specific as a part-time faculty, which was always her dream. Amna says that even as a student, she always saw herself teaching at this institution which she admires, and to her, that wish became an even better reality when she was offered a full-time teaching job at the college that she graduated from very proudly.

Upon joining the teaching realm at ZU, Amna was quite nervous, worried that students would not take her seriously, being young and close to them in age. The first class she taught was for males, and this gave her an even bigger anxiety. However, with time, and now in her fourth full-time teaching semester at the university, she appreciates students and their respect towards faculty, for she always feels like they look up to her and feel at ease, knowing that she understands their issues and concerns.

Amna says her experience at CHSS was amazing, and now that she is part of its family, she constantly works on making sure her students get the same knowledge and the same insights that she holds due to her years as a student at ZU. She mainly highlights the fact that students at CHSS are always close to each other, supporting peers and being positive team members. As a ZU graduate, Amna is so grateful to faculty who taught her, who challenged her and gave her insights that she would have never encountered elsewhere. And to work with them now and to be their colleague is a great joy.

Amna considers Zayed University the place that helped her nourish in terms of writing, critical thinking, and research, and she applied those skills greatly in the workplace and also in the MA program, and she is continuously working now on instilling those skills in her ZU students so they benefit the same effective way she did.

She currently utilizes her experience at ZU in her classroom, challenging students, allowing them to engage in discussions and to ask questions. She tries to provide the same environment she was lucky to have as a student, and so far, it has been working very well. She helps students develop, especially with constant support, which she considers key to learning.

Amna is additionally working as Quality Coordinator at CHSS, and it has opened my eyes to many issues that never struck her before like the importance of learning outcomes in syllabi.

She says that quality assurance is so significant, especially in academia, and for that reason, they work closely with the assessment of learning outcomes,

how students are doing in critical thinking, research capacity, and language.

Outcomes and rubrics are evaluated, and quality assurance reports are then written.

It is an interesting job, for it is important to check how students are benefiting in the class and to what extent.

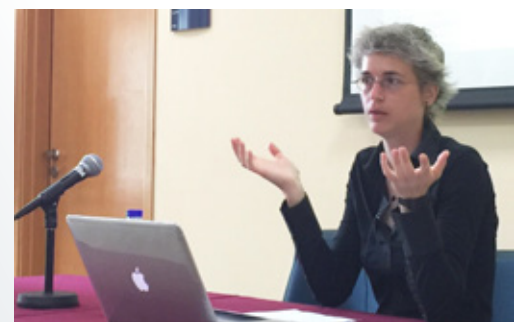
Raising awareness about quality in the college has been an integral part of the quality assurance team, as Amna states, and reports are constantly circulated among faculty before going to the Quality Assurance Committee. The hope is that compliance will be raised, and the aim is for CHSS to have a high percentage and good standing when it comes to that matter.

CHSS News

CHSS current visiting scholar Dr. Viola Thimm gave a lecture on January 25 in the Dubai campus about: "Umrah & Ziarah Dubai: Clothing and Shopping Practices of Malaysian Pilgrims".

Dr. Viola Thimm is Research Fellow at the Asia-Africa-Institute at Hamburg University (Germany). From December 2017 to April 2018, she is Visiting Researcher at Zayed University (College of Humanities and Social Sciences). She was awarded her doctoral degree in Cultural Anthropology in 2013 from University of Göttingen (Germany) with a dissertation on Gender and Educational Migration in Singapore and Malaysia. She was guest researcher at Monash University (Malaysia) in 2017, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) in 2009 and at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) (now ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute), Singapore in 2008.

The lecture discussed the special role of traveling in Islam. The spirituality of travel becomes obvious in the big (haj) and the small (umrah) pilgrimage journey to the holy places of Islam in today's Saudi-Arabia as well as in visiting graves of saints (ziarah) even outside the Arabian Peninsula. In Malaysia, travel agencies offer umrah journeys connected with ziarah, which are understood here as part religious observance and part holiday and leisure.



Malay women from Malaysia especially choose Dubai as the destination for ziarah due to the possibilities for going shopping. They are particularly interested in purchasing the abaya, a long black garment which is usually worn by Arab women. The way of dressing plays an important role in bodily self-representation and in communicating one's self-image to the outside world. The lecture gave insights into gendered negotiations of consumerist practices by Muslim Malaysian women on the religious journey to Dubai, especially with regard to the body and dress codes.



New Publications

Dr. Noora Mohammed, Co-chair of Islamic World Studies in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, has published two books. The first book is in English, entitled: *Immunizing Youth Against Extremist Ideology: A Purposeful Necessity*. This study, through its sharia objective (Maqasid) analysis, presents a holistic view to understand the terrorist ideology in order to immunize the youth against it. By using the analytical scientific approach, which is based on the derivation and deduction of information from its primary sources, the author addresses the following issues: firstly, the contradiction of the terrorist thoughts and beliefs with the objectives of sharia provided by the five schools of Islamic Jurisprudence. Secondly, the various reasons and motives for terrorist thoughts (Social, educational, religious, cultural, economic) which facilitate the committing of terrorist acts. Thirdly, the various means to immunize the youth against terrorist thought, including: a warm and appropriate family life, which in turn protects the children from strange violent beliefs, as well as providing support, warmth and ongoing companionship to the child within the family; educational institutions should immunize young people against any terrorist thought through choosing qualified teachers and focusing on the content of the curricula as well making the role of effective in community service.



As for the second, it is in Arabic entitled: *Medical examination and consultation before marriage in the light of Sharia: the example of the United Arab Emirates, Cairo, Egypt, Alexandria*.

In this book, the subject of medical examination and consultation before marriage was examined in accordance with Islamic law for scholars and subdivisions for purposes according to interests as well as marriage legislation in Islam. The concept of premarital medical examination was included, and the benefits and disadvantages of this examination. It dealt with the legal view of medical examination and pre-marriage consultation and the views of supporters and opponents of this examination.

Council Membership

Dr. Kaltham Almajid, Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic World Studies, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, member of the Muslim Council for Elders. This council includes elite of wise scholars, scientists, intellectuals, experts from the Islamic world and Dr. Ahmad Al Tayyib, Grand Imam of Al Azhar Al Sharif, chairman of the council. The aim of the Council, which is based in Abu Dhabi, is to promote peace in Muslim communities, discourage fighting and address the sources of conflict, divisiveness, fragmentation in Muslim communities and facing extremist ideologies that are contrary to human values and principles of Islam.



The Council of Elders has carried out several achievements aimed at bringing peace and combating extremism, including conferences and international meetings aimed at promoting a spirit of tolerance with those of other religions. The last mission of the Council of Elders in collaboration with Al-Azhar in Cairo is the Al-Azhar International Conference in support of Jerusalem. The conference brought together delegations and researchers from eighty-six countries from the East and the West.

Dr. Kaltham discussed a research paper entitled: *Rights of the Christians in the United Arab Emirates*. This paper investigated a variety of issues which reveal the Christian community living there and the rights provided by the country to them and to other residents as well, including social rights, healthcare, educational services and their rights to perform their religious rituals...etc. which are all guaranteed by the state.

CHSS New Appointments

- Dr. Habibul Khondker** - Associate Dean
- Dr. Rima Sabban** - Reinstated as Asst. Dean of Research & Graduate Studies
- Dr. Susanne Kranz** - Internship Coordinator

Congratulations



The College of Humanities and Social sciences would like to congratulate Bushra Fahad and Nashwa Kamal for graduating from the ILM program level 2 & 3.

The ILM is a year program with a total of 12 sessions in Leadership and Team Skills. The program's objective is to upskill UAE Nationals with Leadership and Management Skills required to excel in their current and future roles.

The Certificate in Leadership and Team Skills has been awarded by the Institute of Leadership and Management which is the UK's premier awarding body for leadership and management qualifications.

- New Member of Faculty**
Prof. Saber Lahbacha - Assistant Professor – Arabic Department
- New Members of Staff**
Mrs. Jamila Abdo - Academic Advisor – AUH Campus
Ms. Tahani AlQahatani - AA – AUH Campus

We welcome above Faculty and Staff on Board of CHSS